



March 16, 2012

The Honorable Tim Walberg  
U.S. House of Representatives  
418 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-2207

Dear The Honorable Tim Walberg:

On behalf of the City of Battle Creek, its citizens and government, its elected officials, its businesses, and its economic development specialists, this correspondence respectfully urges you to bring to a halt the Air Force's recent proposal for FY 2013 budget cuts. While we understand and support the need for budget cuts, we believe that the formula for cost savings to cut the C-27J from the Air Force inventory is flawed and should be reviewed. In fact, the aircraft, when operated by the Air National Guard, will provide very cost effective service. We are also concerned that the job loss affiliated with personnel cuts at the Battle Creek Air National Guard Base will cause material harm to our municipality.

Specifically, the Air Force proposes removing the C-27J from its inventory. Not only will the aircraft provide vital disaster response and emergency transport for the State of Michigan, it is an unparalleled fit with the existing infrastructure, manpower, and training and employment opportunities for guardsmen and women in Battle Creek. This infrastructure supports cost efficient operations. Please note that Duncan Aviation, based in Battle Creek, is among the continent's largest aircraft maintenance and refurbishment operations, providing jobs to drilling guardsmen. Likewise, the Western Michigan University College of Aviation, with its pilot training and maintenance curricula, is both a training ground and employer adjacent to the 110<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing base in Battle Creek.

The citizens of Battle Creek have over the years committed unmatched support for the Air National Guard at WK Kellogg field:

- In 1984 by a 4 to 1 majority, Battle Creek voters pledged to extend the runway from 7,003 to 10,003 feet to meet the needs of the Air National Guard;
- In 2006, the city's economic development authority purchased 74 acres of residentially-zoned, vacant property to preclude encroachment; and
- Battle Creek proactively contributed resources and/or sought matching funds for the construction of a new air traffic control tower to address line of sight issues and constructed a parallel runway to enhance safety.

Accountability contrary to the Air Force budget cuts abound:

- The Air National Guard provides 35% of total Air Force capability at 6% of the cost;
- At 21% of uniformed members of the Total Air Force, the Air National Guard is being asked to bear 59% of the cuts of total aircraft and six times the per capita personnel cuts; and
- The Air National Guard has the highest experience level in the total force, the lowest base operating costs, and the lowest life cycle costs.

Our friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens bear the brunt, as the Air Force proposes to discard the C-27J. The jobs loss primarily affects Battle Creek in Calhoun County, and Kalamazoo County. While we understand that the US must ameliorate its budget issues, we believe the Air Force erred in its judgment to remove the C-27J from the Air National Guard. It is not the right choice.

Sincerely,



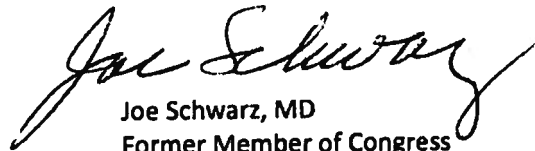
Ken Tsuchiyama  
City Manager



Susan Baldwin  
Mayor



Karl Dehn  
President and CEO  
Battle Creek Unlimited



Joe Schwarz, MD  
Former Member of Congress



Kara Beer  
Executive Director  
Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce



Tom Burt  
Chief Operating Officer  
Duncan Aviation



Dave Powell  
Dean  
Western Michigan University College of Aviation